



**U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement**

News Release

September 20, 2005

ICE SEIZES MORE THAN 2 KILOS OF HEROIN AND 400 KILOS OF COCAINE IN PUERTO RICO

Four citizens of the Dominican Republic and one citizen of Venezuela arrested in two separate incidents.

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico—A 30-year woman from the Dominican Republic was arrested here Friday by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents for attempting to smuggle more than 2 kilograms of heroin.



Dianneris Rodriguez arrived at the Mayaguez, Puerto Rico port-of-entry from the Dominican Republic on board the Caribbean Express Ferry. During U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) inspection Rodriguez stated that she had nothing to declare, however, her suspicious behavior prompted CBP inspectors to conduct a thorough inspection of her vehicle. The inspectors found 4 packages of a powdery substance that field-tested positive as heroin. ICE agents seized the 2.53 kilograms of heroin and charged Rodriguez with violations of Title 18 United States Code (USC) section 841 and 952.

“Those involved in criminal activity who think they can easily introduce drugs into the United States by using the ferry from Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic to Mayaguez, Puerto Rico are mistaken,” said Lydia St. John-Mellado, acting special agent in charge of ICE investigations in Puerto Rico. ICE and its DHS partners are working together in Puerto Rico to detect those who try to circumvent our immigration and customs laws.”

Dianneris Rodriguez is in ICE custody at the Metropolitan Detention Center (MDC) in Guaynabo, Puerto Rico awaiting the outcome of her case.

In a similar incident, ICE agents arrested three citizens of the Dominican Republic and one citizen of Venezuela for attempting to smuggle more than 400 kilograms of cocaine through the eastern municipality of Fajardo, Puerto Rico.

Sebastian Pita-Almonte, Luis R. Reyes-Gomez, and Teodoro Miranda-Severino, Dominican citizens, and Ramon Graterol-Rodriguez, citizen of Venezuela, were traveling in a “yola” when a CBP patrol aircraft, on a routine mission, spotted a suspicious vessel near Fajardo, Puerto Rico.

CBP marine enforcement officers were launched to intercept the vessel, leading to the seizure of 16 bales of cocaine weighing approximately 400 kilograms.

The four occupants of the smuggling boat were charged with violations of Title 18, USC 841 and 846 and are in ICE custody at the Guaynabo, Puerto Rico MDC.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.